

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 FREETO 00361 251619Z

47

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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P R 251610Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO AMEMBASSY BERNE PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 797

S E C R E T FREETOWN 0361

E.O. 11652: XGDS3

TAGS: PINT, SL

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF SL PRESIDENT STEVENS

1. SL PRESIDENT SIAKA STEVENS DEPARTED FREETOWN FEB 16 FOR WHAT OFFICIALLY DESCRIBED AS "PRIVATE VISIT TO EUROPE." CONSIDERABLE SECRECY SURROUNDS TRIP AND NO DETAILS OF LOCATION OR DURATION MADE PUBLIC BUT EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED, WE BELIEVE RELIABLY, THAT MAJORITY OF ABSENCE, SAID TO BE OF TEN TO TWELVE DAYS' DURATION, EXPECTED TO BE SPENT GETTING MEDICAL CHECK-UP IN LAUSANNE. WHILE STEVENS HAS MADE SIMILAR TRIPS IN PREVIOUS YEARS AND TRIP COULD BE ROUTINE, WE FURTHER INFORMED THAT STEVENS, WHO IS 69, HAS BEEN SUFFERING RECENTLY FROM FREQUENT, UNEXPLAINED SEVERE HEADACHES.

2. IN VIEW POTENTIALLY SERIOUS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES IN SIERRA LEONE OF DEPARTURE OR KNOWN IMMINENT DEPARTURE OF STEVENS FROM POLITICAL SCENE, WHICH WOULD VERY LIKELY BRING SHARP INFIGHTING FOR SUCCESSION, WOULD APPRECIATE ANYTHING YOU CAN FIND OUT ABOUT STATUS STEVENS' HEALTH.
SAMUELS

SECRET

NNN

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